

Water Lines

SDW Hotline Report

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Top Ten Topics

Topic	Questions (phone & e-mail)	Percent of Total* Questions
Consumer Confidence Reports	561	15
Local Drinking Water Quality	428	11
Tap Water Testing	327**	9
Home Water Treatment Units	199	5
Cryptosporidium	177	5
Lead	163	4
SWT Rule and FBRR	132	3
Household Wells	124	3
Non-EPA Environmental	124	3
Other Background	116	3

*A total of 3,822 questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and e-mail) in July 2003.

**Citizens who obtain their drinking water from private household wells asked 16 percent of the tap water testing questions.

Calls	E-mails	Total***
2,539	313	2,852

***A single call or e-mail may generate multiple questions.

Published Monthly

See past reports at

<http://intranet.epa.gov/ow/hotline>

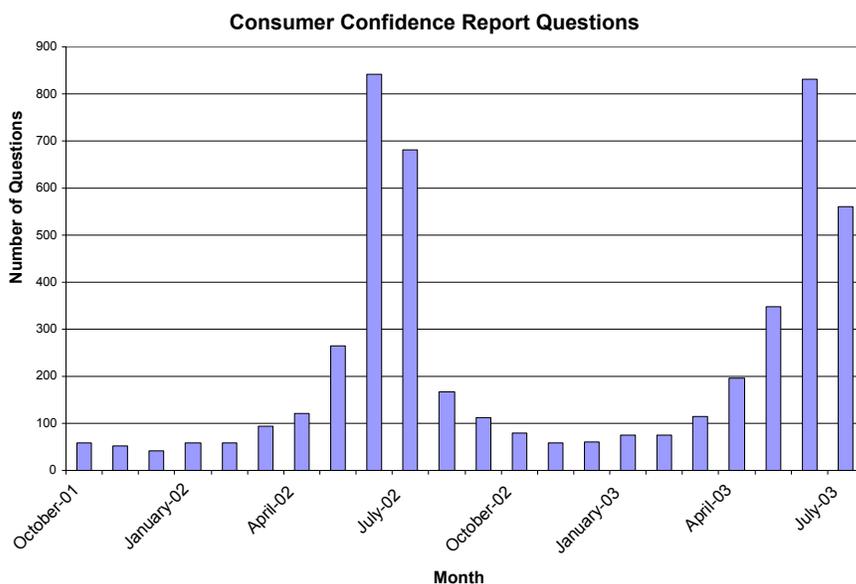
Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National Toll-free No.: (800) 426-4791 or (877) EPAWATER

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Monthly Trends

Over the past two years, the Safe Drinking Water Hotline has noticed a distinct trend in the consumer confidence report (CCR) question call volume. As illustrated in the chart below, the call volume from October 2001 through July 2003 reveals a predictable surge of CCR related questions beginning in the spring months, peaking in June, and then tapering off through July and August. This year, the Hotline answered more CCR questions in the spring months of 2003 than for the same period in 2002. This may be in part due to earlier completion and delivery of reports by community water systems or in part due to water system customers becoming more aware of the reports.



Did You Know?

Approximately 95 percent of all rural Americans get their drinking water from a groundwater source.

(Water Systems Council; August 7, 2003)

What's New

New Publications:

- *Fact Sheet: Announcement of Completion of EPA's Review of Existing Drinking Water Standards*, EPA815-F-03-001, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/review.html.
- Supporting Documentation for the Six-Year Review of Existing National Primary Drinking Water Regulations is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/review.html.
- *Fact Sheet: Announcement of Regulatory Determinations for Priority Contaminants on the Drinking Water Contaminant Candidate List*, EPA815-F-03-007, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/ccl/cclregdetermine.html.
- The *Proposed Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule*, fact sheet, EPA815-F-03-005, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/index.html.
- The draft *Source Water Monitoring Guidance Manual for Public Water Systems for the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2 Rule)*, EPA815-D-03-005, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/guides.html.
- The draft *Microbial Laboratory Manual for the Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2 Rule)*, EPA815-D-03-006, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/guides.html.
- The draft *Ultraviolet Disinfection Guidance Manual*, EPA815-D-03-007, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/guides.html.
- *Ultraviolet Disinfection Guidance Manual Workbook* is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/guides.html.
- The draft *Membrane Filtration Guidance Manual*, EPA815-D-03-008, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/guides.html.
- The draft *Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule Toolbox Guidance Manual*, EPA815-D-03-009, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lt2/guides.html.
- *Fact Sheet: Proposed Stage 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule*, EPA815-F-03-006, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/stage2/index.html.
- The draft *Initial Distribution System Evaluation (IDSE) Guidance Manual*, EPA815-D-03-002, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/stage2/guides.html.
- The draft *Significant Excursions Guidance Manual*, EPA815-D-03-004, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/stage2/guides.html.
- *Implementing AWOPs through the Capacity Development and the DWSRF Programs*, EPA816-F-03-019, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/smallsys/ssinfo.htm.
- *Arsenic Treatment Technology Evaluation Handbook for Small Systems*, EPA816-R-03-014, is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/smallsys/ssinfo.htm.

Calendar:

Who?	What?	Where?	When?	More Information
NDWAC	Contaminant Candidate List Classification Process Work Group	Washington, DC	7/16/2003 – 7/17/2003	
EPA	Community Involvement Conference	Philadelphia, PA	7/22/2003 – 7/25/2003	
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Albany/Troy, NY	7/28/2003 – 7/29/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Kansas City, KS	8/19/2003 – 8/20/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
ASIWPCA	Annual Conference	Whitefish, MT	8/24/2003 – 8/26/2003	
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Dallas, TX	8/26/2003 – 8/27/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	New Chelmsford, MA	9/8/2003 – 9/9/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Hartford, CT	9/10/2003 – 9/11/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
NDWAC	Contaminant Candidate List Classification Process Work Group	Washington, DC	9/17/2003 – 9/18/2003	
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	EPA HQ - Satellite	9/22/2003 – 9/24/2003	For more information: www.epa.gov/safewater/mbdp/implementation.html
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Kent, WA	9/29/2003 – 9/30/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Dover, DE	9/30/2003 – 10/1/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Atlanta, GA	10/22/2003 – 10/23/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Chicago, IL	10/28/2003 – 10/29/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
EPA	Stage 1 DBPR Train The Trainer Session	Phoenix, AZ	11/6/2003 – 11/7/2003	To register, contact the SDW Hotline
NDWAC	Contaminant Candidate List Classification Process Work Group	Washington, DC	11/13/2003 – 11/14/2003	

Frequently Asked Qs & As

This section provides answers to frequently asked questions not necessarily represented in one of the Top Ten Topic categories.

Q: The “sum-of-the-fractions” method used to determine MCL compliance for beta particle and photon radioactivity expresses results in millirem/yr; however, results of beta particle analysis are given in pCi/L. How do you convert pCi/L to mrem/yr for the purpose of compliance with the beta particles and photon emitters standard?

A: To determine compliance, each beta and photon emitter must be converted from pCi/L to millirem/yr using the conversion tables listed in *Maximum Permissible Body Burdens and Maximum Permissible Concentrations of Radionuclides in Air or Water for Occupational Exposure* [National Bureau of Standards (NBS) Handbook 69 as amended August 1963, U.S. Department of Commerce] (40 CFR 141.66(d)(2)). Consult section II-B.2 of the *Final Implementation Guidance for Radionuclides*, EPA816-F-00-002, for a sample calculation of “sum-of-the-fractions” and Appendix I for the table of derived concentrations.

Q: What is the difference between aquifer recharge wells and aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) wells?

A: Aquifer recharge wells are used only to replenish water in aquifers, while ASR wells are used to store water and then recover that water for a beneficial use (e.g., drinking water). Both types of wells, however, may have secondary objectives, such as subsidence control and prevention of salt-water intrusion into fresh water aquifers (*The Class V Underground Injection Control Study, Volume 21: Aquifer Recharge and Aquifer Storage and Recovery Wells*, EPA816-R-99-014u, September 1999).

Q: EPA recommends that schools and day care facilities test their drinking water for lead because it is a significant health concern, especially for young children and infants. Is there guidance available for schools and day care facilities that would like to test for lead in their drinking water?

A: EPA has produced several guidance documents that would assist schools and day care facilities with

testing for lead in drinking water. In 1994, EPA published a guidance document entitled *Lead in Drinking Water in School and Nonresidential Buildings*, EPA812-B-94-002, which provides an overall framework for conducting a lead sampling program. EPA also published a companion document entitled *Sampling for Lead in Drinking Water in Nursery Schools and Day Care Facilities*, EPA812-B-94-003. Both of these documents are available on the Internet at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead/testing.htm.

Q: What is the difference between the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the Safe Drinking Water Accession and Review System (SDWARS) and the National Contaminant Occurrence Database (NCOD)?

A: CDX is an electronic data receiving system for most environmental compliance reporting, including UCMR. UCMR data entered into CDX is stored in SDWARS, which is the information system that supports the collection of data for the UCMR. Data in SDWARS is made publicly available through the NCOD. NCOD contains occurrence data about regulated and unregulated contaminants. (*Implementation Guidelines for SDWARS/UCMR Volume I: Introduction to CDX and UCMR Submissions*, EPA816-R-01-022A, December 2001).

Q: The maximum contaminant level (MCL) for total coliform is based on its presence or absence in a water sample (40 CFR 141.63(a)). Why is the total coliform MCL based on presence or absence rather than an estimation of coliform density?

A: The total coliform presence-absence based MCL is used because there is no relationship between coliform densities and either pathogen density or the potential for a waterborne disease outbreak (52 FR 42224, 42227; November 3, 1987). Additionally, coliform presence or absence determination is easier to make than to determine coliform density, is less influenced by sample transit time than a density determination, and is not subject to the calculation difficulties implicit in the statistical methodology of coliform density calculations (54 FR 27544, 27548; June 29, 1989).

Q: I just received my water quality report. Is my water safe to drink?

A: Drinking water meeting national primary drinking water standards is safe to drink, although people with severely compromised immune systems and children may have special needs. Public water systems (PWSs) obtain their water from a variety of sources and treat the water using a variety of available treatment technologies. Because of the different sources of water and the different ways in which water is treated, the quality of drinking water varies from place to place. Over 90 percent of water systems meet EPA's health-based standards for tap water quality. Community water systems are required to send their customers annual consumer confidence reports. These reports tell consumers what contaminants have been detected in their drinking water and how these detection levels compare to drinking water standards. The reports must clearly identify any data indicating violations of health-based standards. The indication of a violation must include language about the potential health effects from consuming water with contaminants at levels above the national standards (OGWDW Frequently Asked Questions Web site, www.epa.gov/safewater/faq/faq.html).

EPA DISCLAIMER

Answers to questions in the Safe Drinking Water Hotline monthly report are intended to be purely informational and are based on SDWA provisions, EPA regulations, guidance, and established policy effective at the time of publication. The answers given reflect EPA staff's best judgment at the time and do not represent a final or official EPA interpretation. This report does not substitute for the applicable provisions of statutes and regulations, guidance, etc., nor is it a regulation itself. Thus, it does not impose legally-binding requirements on EPA, States, or the regulated community. An answer to a question in this report may be revised at any time to reflect EPA's revisions to existing regulations, changes in EPA's approach to interpreting its regulations or statutory authority, or for other reasons. EPA may provide a different answer to a question in this report in the future.

Also, an answer provided in this report may not apply to a particular situation based upon the circumstances. Any decisions regarding a particular case will be made based on the applicable statutes and regulations. Therefore, interested parties are free to raise questions and objections about the appropriateness of the application of an answer in this report to a particular situation, and EPA will consider whether or not the recommendations or interpretations in the answer are accurate and appropriate in that situation. The information in this report is not intended, nor can it be relied upon, to create any rights enforceable by any party in litigation with the United States.

Monthly Summary of Hotline Service

Total number of calls answered	2,539
Total number of e-mails received	313
Average wait time (in seconds)	0:36
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	99.9%
Percent of all calls answered in < 1 min	81.7%
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	100%
Percent of e-mails answered in 5 days	100%
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about local DW quality	532
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about CCRs	727
Number of times callers were transferred to the WSC Wellcare Hotline	383
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing	739

Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	E-mails
July 2003	2,539	313
July 2002	3,800	273

Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
1. Local Water System	358	19
2. State Lab Certification	293	15
3. State PWSS	238	12
4. EPA Internet	215	11
5. NSF/WQA/UL	192	10
6. Local Public Health	105	5
7. AGWT/WSC	88	5
8. FDA/IBWA	79	4
9. Other Hotlines	55	3
10. Other	51	3

*A total of 1,927 referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in July 2003.

Customer Profiles

Customer	Calls	E-mails
Analytical Laboratories	12	1
Citizen - Private Well	198	47
Citizen - PWS	1,771	116
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	92	14
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	88	30
Environmental Groups	3	1
EPA	29	2
Other Federal Agency	6	4
Government, Local	22	9
Government, State	93	17
Government, Tribal	0	0
Spanish Speaking	10	0
International	1	27
Media	9	0
Medical Professional	1	3
Public Water System	99	17
Schools/University	20	25
Other	85	0
TOTALS	2,539	313

Daily Call Data

	Total Calls Answered	Average Wait Time mm:sec
1-July	187	00:26
2-July	203	00:51
3-July	172	00:30
7-July	178	00:44
8-July	155	00:35
9-July	126	00:23
10-July	114	00:17
11-July	108	00:15
14-July	139	00:28
15-July	99	00:23
16-July	95	00:39
17-July	74	00:30
18-July	92	00:40
21-July	85	01:13
22-July	94	01:14
23-July	113	01:08
24-July	70	00:32
25-July	92	00:35
28-July	99	00:21
29-July	85	00:36
30-July	83	00:30
31-July	76	00:27
TOTALS	2,539	00:36

Topic Categories

Category	Calls	E-mails
Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts		
Chlorine	20	4
Coliforms	86	8
Cryptosporidium	176	1
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	44	5
Disinfection – Home Water	25	1
Other Microbials	33	4
Storage – Home Water	11	2
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	123	9
Trihalomethane (THM)	21	1
Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)		
Arsenic	32	6
Fluoride	23	2
Methyl- <i>tertiary</i> -butyl-ether (MTBE)	7	0
Perchlorate	9	10
Phase I, II & V	37	3
Sodium Monitoring	3	1
Sulfate	2	0
Lead and Copper		
Copper	23	1
Lead	159	4
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	6	0
Radionuclides		
Radionuclides (Other)	17	2
Radionuclides (Radon)	54	2
Secondary DW Regulations		
Secondary DW Regulations	58	3
SDWA Background/Overview		
Definitions & Applicability	20	6
MCL List	78	6
Other Background	89	27
SDWA	23	1

Category	Calls	E-mails
Water on Tap	6	1
Other DW Regulations		
Analytical Methods (DW)	24	17
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	4	0
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	548	13
DW Primacy (PWS)	1	1
Operator (PWS) Certification	3	0
Other Drinking Water Security	23	13
Public Notification (PWS)	77	5
Security Planning Grants	2	2
State Revolving Fund (DW)	4	3
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	28	2
Other Drinking Water		
Additives Program	6	1
Bottled Water	99	7
Complaints about PWS	102	13
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	20	6
Home Water Treatment Units	186	13
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	4	7
Local DW Quality	399	29
Tap Water Testing	303	24
Treatment/BATs (DW)	21	4
Drinking Water Source Protection		
Ground Water Rule	3	1
Sole Source Aquifer	1	0
Source Water/Wellhead Protection	30	21
UIC Program	12	4
Out of Purview		
Household Wells	92	32
Non-Environmental	79	7
Non-EPA Environmental	103	21
Other EPA (Programs)	72	35
TOTALS	3,431	391

SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT

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APPENDIX A: FEDERAL REGISTER SUMMARIES

NOTICES

**“Meeting of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC)”
July 1, 2003 (68 FR 39086)**

EPA announced the forthcoming conference call meeting of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (Council), established under the Safe Drinking Water Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 300f et seq.). The Council will discuss follow-up actions relating to a report presented at the May 2003 meeting by NDWAC's Work Group on Affordability. This is a follow-up conference call to the conference call held on June 20, 2003. The Council meeting will be held on July 10, 2003.

**“Public Water Supply Supervision Program Revision for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico”
July 2, 2003 (68 FR 39557)**

EPA has determined to approve an application by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to revise its Public Water Supply Supervision Primacy Program to incorporate regulations no less stringent than EPA's National Primary Drinking Water Regulations. This determination will become final and effective on August 1, 2003, unless a timely and appropriate request for a public hearing is received or the Regional Administrator elects to hold a public hearing.

**“Public Water System Supervision Program Revision for the State of South Carolina”
July 11, 2003 (68 FR 41368)**

EPA announced that the State of South Carolina is revising its approved Public Water System Supervision Program to include drinking water regulations for the Filter Backwash Recycling Rule. EPA has determined that the state Filter Backwash Recycling Rule meets all minimum federal requirements, and is no less stringent than the corresponding federal regulations. Therefore, EPA has tentatively decided to approve the state program revisions. If no timely and appropriate request for a hearing is received and the Regional Administrator does not elect to hold a hearing, this determination will become final and effective on August 11, 2003.

**“Announcement of Regulatory Determinations for Priority Contaminants on the Drinking Water Contaminant Candidate List”
July 18, 2003 (68 FR 42898)**

EPA announced that no regulatory action is appropriate, at this time, for the nine contaminant candidate list (CCL) contaminants published in the June 2002 preliminary regulatory determination notice (67 FR 38222). The announcement describes the statutory requirements for the CCL, the analysis EPA used to make the regulatory determinations, a summary of relevant public comments with the Agency's responses, a summary of the nine CCL contaminants, and the Agency's findings for each contaminant.

**“National Primary Drinking Water Regulations; Announcement of Completion of EPA's Review of Existing Drinking Water Standards”
July 18, 2003 (68 FR 42908)**

EPA announced that it has completed its review of 69 National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs) that were established prior to 1997, including 68 chemical NPDWRs and the Total Coliform Rule (TCR). Based on the Agency's preliminary review, as well as the public comments received and other new information, EPA believes that it is appropriate to revise the TCR. The Agency also believes that it is not appropriate to revise the 68 chemical NPDWRs at this time.

**"Agency Information Collection Activities; OMB Responses”
July 25, 2003 (68 FR 44076)**

This document announced the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) responses to Agency clearance requests, in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 et. seq.). Specifically, EPA ICR No. 1912.01, “National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for Lead and Copper (Final Rule),” was given a short-term extension. The expiration date for this ICR, OMB Number 2040-0210, is now September 30, 2003.

**"National Drinking Water Advisory Council; Request for Nominations”
July 25, 2003 (68 FR 44078)**

EPA invites all interested persons to nominate qualified individuals to serve a three-year term as members of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council (Council). This Council was established by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) to provide practical and independent advice, consultation, and recommendations to the Agency on the activities, functions, and policies related to the implementation of the SDWA. On December 15th of each year, five members complete their appointment. This notice solicits names to fill the five vacancies, with appointed terms ending on December 15, 2006. All nominations must be received by October 15, 2003.